

<h1>BRIEFING</h1>	<b>TO:</b>	Improving Places Select Commission
	<b>DATE:</b>	9 June 2020
	<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	Sarah Watts Strategic Housing Manager Adult Care, Housing and Public Health 01709 336476 sarah.watts@rotherham.gov.uk
	<b>TITLE:</b>	Housing Strategy 2019-22 Progress Update

## 1. Background

- 1.1** The Housing Strategy 2019-22 was approved by Cabinet and published in April 2019.
- The Strategy sets out four key areas of focus;
- Creating Homes
  - Strengthening Communities
  - Improving Health
  - Working Together
- Monthly monitoring is carried out by the Strategic Housing Team and twice-yearly update reports will be provided to forum members and Rotherham Together Partnership boards, which is shared with the Improving Places Select Commission.

## 2. Key Issues

### 2.1 Performance Measures:

Measure	Measure 2019/20	Progress
Net new homes	Target: 550 new homes  2019/20 performance = 551	The Council's target was met due to actions taken including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing excellent performance by the Planning Service on processing applications</li> <li>• Joint working between planning and housing to ensure a collaborative approach and focus on delivery</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic three-way meetings with Homes England and the Sheffield City Region to understand viability challenges</li> <li>• Housing developer summit to stimulate development activity</li> <li>• Publication of Rotherham's Housing Delivery Test Action Plan August 2019</li> </ul>
Number of new homes delivered as a result of Council intervention	Target 20/21 = 175 2019/20 performance = 177	This shows that the Council contributed to approximately one third of all home completed last year.
New Council Homes delivered via modern methods of construction (MMC)	Target: 22	The MMC scheme is to be included in a Housing Delivery Programme report to Cabinet in September 2020.
% properties in Selective Licensing areas which are compliant	Target: 95% 2015/20 schemes: 98%	2015/20 scheme completed and final report to be produced by CPU. Target achieved.  Commencement of six schemes 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2020 to 2025. The current four areas have been revised and two new areas created, Parkgate and Thurcroft.
Long term empties brought back into use with Council intervention	Current position, long-term empties; Oct 2018 – 0.93% Oct 2019 – 1.03%  Based on est.118,035 addresses. Source: RMBC Council Tax / BRE	Empty Homes plan produced, and recruitment to new Empty Homes Officer post to commence June / July 2020.

		Target to be agreed following appointment of new officer.	
Council Homes average re-let times		Target: 21 days March 22.03 days	Slightly above target, however the Housing Service is currently focusing on increasing tenancy sustainment.
% of people living in fuel poverty in the private rented sector		2017 National data: Rotherham All tenure: 10.1% Private Rented Sector: 17.2% PRS national average: 35.1%  Next update due: Oct 2020 for 2018.  Projected (BRE Feb 20): All tenure: 11.9% Private Rented: 18.60% All private: 6.56%	Target to be agreed.  The completion of a new Private Sector Stock Condition Survey has provided us with more accurate baseline data.  Affordable Warmth Strategy currently under development.
No. of people prevented from becoming homeless		Included in separate briefing on homelessness	Included in separate briefing on homelessness
Percentage of Council stock that is; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decent</li> <li>• Gas safety compliant</li> </ul>		March 20; Target: 99.5% Actual: 100% Target: 100% Actual:99.93%	Above target Excellent performance although slightly below target due to Covid-19 – vulnerable people self-isolating and refusals - unable to apply to courts.

**Action plan commitments:**

Action	Progress
<p>Deliver the current £57m housing development programme</p>	<p>Progress is well under way on a number of sites in the borough.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Bellows – following a suspension of work during the Covid-19 pandemic the site has re-opened and all homes will be completed by summer 2020.</li> <li>• Clusters programme – Four of the seven sites are fully completed, Braithwell Road will complete during June, and the final homes on Rother View Road, Canklow will be complete by the end of August 2020.</li> <li>• Broom Hayes – started on site April 2019, to be completed during 2020/21.</li> <li>• Town Centre: work commenced in Feb 2020; estimated completion across the 3 sites 2022.</li> </ul>
<p>Develop pipeline of small sites to deliver more new homes</p>	<p>Housing development programme to be reported to Cabinet in September 2020 which sets out delivery routes for a range of HRA small sites, including direct delivery by the Council and sale to housing associations and small / local builders.</p>
<p>Work with Homes England and across the SCR to secure additional funds to accelerate and increase delivery</p>	<p>Contributing to the development of a SCR housing pipeline through direct engagement with SCR and Homes England.</p>
<p>Develop the Rother Living brand through a marketing plan for new products</p>	<p>The Rother Living web site has been launched, and the rate of sales and reservations continues to be healthy for homes for sale and shared ownership homes. The Council is currently working on a revised and enhanced sales strategy with its sales / marketing partners.</p>

<p>Increase the number of new homes in the Town Centre</p>	<p>In October 2019 Cabinet approved proposals to build 171 homes on 3 Council-owned town centre sites, funded from the HRA with support from Homes England and the Sheffield City Region, and work commenced in Feb 20. All homes will be completed by the end of 2022. The Council is working with Homes England, SCR and private land owners / potential developers to explore further town centre housing opportunities.</p>
<p>Completion of MMC pilot and assess potential to deliver at scale</p>	<p>The MMC project will be included in the September 2020 Cabinet report.</p>
<p>Review the potential to increase the number of areas of Selective Licensing</p>	<p>2015/20 scheme completed and final report to be produced by CPU. Target exceeded but further analysis to be undertaken which considers wider outcomes.</p> <p>Commencement of six schemes 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020 to 2025. The current four areas have been revised and two new areas created, Parkgate and Thurcroft.</p>
<p>Develop a suite of tools to enable empty homes to be brought back into use</p>	<p>Empty Homes plan produced, and recruitment to new Empty Homes Officer post to commence June / July 2020.</p>
<p>Appoint partners as part of the new repairs and maintenance contract</p>	<p>After a rigorous tender process, the new R&amp;M contract commenced in April 2020 with Mears and Engie.</p>
<p>Increase the overall number of care and support ready housing available for Council rent</p>	<p>The focus is on understanding care and support needs, in order to feed into the current development programme;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commissioned the Care and Support Accommodation Report</li> <li>• Development of an Adult Care and Housing Market Position Statement - Autumn 2020</li> <li>• Needs assessment of homelessness / rough sleeper requirements</li> <li>• Needs assessment of families with complex needs</li> <li>• Secured funding through the LGA Housing Advisors programme to lead a regional project to develop a strategic needs</li> </ul>

	<p>assessment of the accommodation needs of people with a learning disability, autism and mental health needs</p> <p>Strategic Housing to ensure the needs of all cohorts are fully understood so opportunities through the development programme can be explored.</p>
Publication of the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy	<p>The Strategy was published in May 2019.</p> <p>Progress reports are produced every six months.</p>
Develop a clear programme of care and support ready homes to help address pressures on social care budgets	Housing continue to work closely with Adult Social Care Commissioning to understand the housing requirements of the Market Position Statement.
Development of a model to monitor the economic, social and environmental value of new homes	A corporate Social Value Policy was adopted in November 2019.
Work with local housing providers and seek partnerships in the private sector to help address key issues such as homelessness and specific care and support needs	Strategic Housing and Housing Options are currently working in partnership to explore how to engage private landlords and empty property owners to offer up their properties to meet the borough's housing needs, including the potential for a local leasing scheme.
Hold the annual developer summit and build on relationships with SME	Due to the election in December the Developers Summit was held 21 <sup>st</sup> January 2020. After a fourth successful event, the Developers Summit will be held again in December 2020.

Other headlines:

- Soft market testing of various Council-owned sites has been completed and a range of sites will be released during 2020/21.
- Additional resources and realignment to improve neighbourhood working arrangements
- Tenant Engagement Framework refreshed
- The Bellows awarded Inside Housing's 'Best Shared Ownership Development – Urban'
- Award for Financial Inclusion support services

<b>3. Key Actions and Timelines</b>	
<b>3.1</b>	<p>Key areas of focus for the next six months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval of the Annual Housing Development Programme (September Cabinet meeting)</li> <li>• Implementation of Empty Homes Plan (from July 2020)</li> <li>• Housing Service Covid-19 recovery plan</li> </ul>
<b>4. Recommendations</b>	
<b>4.1</b>	The Improving Places Select Commission continues to receive twice yearly update reports.